



Armour of proof, or

A Sovereign Antidote, against the
contagion of evil company. Together
with the *skill*, *will*, and *industry* of lewd
ones; in tempting to sin, and drawing
to perdition. Being subjects of con-
cernment for the younger
sort.

THE SECOND PART.

By R. Younge of Roxwel in Essex, Florilegus.

*My son, if sinners entise thee, consent thou not: walk thou not
in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path. Prov.
I. IO. 15.*



TO
AL YOUNG STUDENTS, IN THE UNIVERSITIES AND INN'S OF COURT APPRENTISES OF LONDON, SONS AND SERVANTS IN THE WHOLE NATION.

R. Y.

Dedicates this small peece of his Labours, and wisheth increase of all grace and happines.

Armour of proof, against evil Society, &c.

The second part.

Sect. 24.

AN D so much of the first part, touching the many advantages, *that Satants instruments* have above *Gods servants*, in *winning*, and *keeping*, and *improving* there converts: What men ought to do, that would not be overcome by these aluerments: and that of all the rest, we must refrain the company of wicked men, and not dispute with them; if we mean not to be infected by them, partake of there sins, nor be infeoffed in there punishments: Together with the Lawfulness of shunning all familier Society, and converse with such. And now least what hath been said, should not be sufficient: See in this *Second part*, some *Reasons* to inforce men there unto; which the Godly wise propound to themselves, when they bid adue to there old associates in the *broad way*, and purpose to pledg them no more, in there wicked customs.

Reasons of breaking off Society, with our vicious Consorts.

The reasons are principally 5. and they are weighty.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

They may come to the *fight* of their *errors*.

That { we may not be { *Infected by them, nor partake of their sinnes.*
Infeoffed in their punishments.

So farre as is possible we may be *at peace* with all men.

{ Because their company would *bereave* us of much *comfort*, which otherwise we should enjoy, being alone.

First, that thereby they may come to the *fight* of their *errors*, and consequently be *reclaimed*, *S. Paul* when he commands the *Corinthians*

to shut the incestuous person out of their society and fellowship, give this reason, *that his Spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord*, 1 Cor. v. 5. Again, when he writ to Timothy, that he had done the same touching Hymeneus and Alexander, he yeeldeth this to be the reason, *that they might learn not to blaspheme*, 1 Timothy 1. 20. And in another place, *If any man obey not our saying, note him by a letter, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed*, 2 Thes. 3. 14.

It was the practise of the primitive Church, in her first love, that she might shine in beauty and fairness above all other Synagogues, not to admit any scandalous person, or open offender into the Communion of Saints; until their foule spots were carefully washed off, and taken away by the tears of repentance. The bread of the children was not given unto dogs; neither, by an equall bounty, to the godly and the wicked, was there an equal encouragement to godliness and iniquity, but a separation was made between the sick and the whole; and this separation had no other intent, but *edification*; even an edification of the spirit, by the destruction of the flesh: so that men could find no fault with the dispensers of this power, having nothing to complain of; but that their lives thereby were sought to be amended, and their soules to be saved. I confesse, that was a separation of a higher nature, the power of the keyes being added, they were delivered up to Sathan, shut out of Heaven; herein it is not so; but this serves to the same end, and is done only in cases of like fact.

The cause was weighty, for which the gates of Heaven, were to be locked; great, in the thing done; or great, in the wilfulness of the doer; and this not without reason: for the doom was heavy, and fit for the back of a strong and mighty evil: it was a short damnation, a temporall hell, a shutting out of Heaven upon earth, yea, Heaven in Heaven, even the joyes, and comforts of the spirit of consolation. Neither could it be but an excellent remedy, for, besides that it was Gods institution, the remedy was fitted to the disease: a degree of presumption, was encountered with a degree of despaire; the Scorpion was made a medicine, against the sting of the Scorpion; Sathan was set on work, to take him down by terror unto salvation; whom before he animated and puffed up to destruction; he, that said at first, *sin boldly, for ye shall not dye at all*; now he changeth his voyce, and saith, *thy sin is greater then can be forgiven thee*. But the wisdom of dispensation suffered this roaring Lion no longer to terrifie, but until his terror did mollifie: he aimed indeed at despaire and destruction; but the Church aimed at humiliation, and conversion, yea, at consolation and salvation. And indeed *humiliation* for sin, is the only way to *conversion* from sin; *conversion* from sin, the only way to the *consolations* of the Spirit; and the comfortable spirit is both the guide and the way to life eternal: therefore, when the man is humbled, Sathan is cashiered; the horseleech is taken away, when he hath sufficiently abated the vicious and superfluous blood.

Thus were men healed, by wounding; exalted by humbling: O admirable use and command of Sathan! he is an enemy to God, and yet doth him good; he is an adversary to man, and yet helps him. A strange thing, that

Sathan should help the incestuous *Corinthian*, to the *destruction* of his flesh, his concupiscence, and the *edification* of his soul. A strange thing that Sathan should teach *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* not to blaspheme: he is the author of blasphemies, and yet he teacheth not to blaspheme.

But is Sathan contrary to himself, and is his Kingdom divided in it self? no surely: but one that is stronger then he both in wisdom and power, manageth both his craft and malice, to ends, which himself intendeth not. The devil is one and the same still, even purely malicious; but God suffers him to go on in his temptations, just so farre as temptation is profitable, and no further: therefore while Sathan is driving the offender to despair, God stops his course, when the sinner is come to due humiliation: and then, as it was with *Christ* in the wilderness, so is it with the humbled sinner, Sathan is dismissed, and the Angels come and minister unto him.

This was the nature, manner, and end of publike excommunication: private hath relation to it; both touching cause and end. First, publike had respect to the cause; that it was to be used, only in case of scandalous, open, and notorious impiety: so hath the private; we do not break off society with any for weakneses, and sins of infirmity. Secondly, that did only aime at their amendment, conversion, and salvation: so doth this; we desire only to have them look into themselves, where the fault lyes, and seek to amend their course: and certainly nothing will sooner make the adulterers or drunkard bethink themselves, then when they see, all that are honest and sober, even their neighbours and old associates, shun their company and despise them, as if they were not worthy of humane society: and if they have the least desire to be reputed honest and sober again, and admitted their familiar converse, (without which, they are, as it were, banished into exile) they will do what possibly lyes in them to redeem their credit, and merit their good opinion, by a more sober, honest, and holy demeanour: the disparity lyeth only in the power and severity of the agents; we cannot, we dot not, we desire not to deliver them up to Sathan; but heartily pray that they may be delivered from him, and all evill.

§. 25.

Secondly, That we may not be infected by them, nor partake of their sins. It is a true Proverb, *Evil company corrupts good manners*: and *He that will not evill do, must keep from all that longs thereto*. To be safe from evil works, is to avoid the occasions; especially, he that will keep himself from iniquity, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, must have no fellowship with wicked persons, the workers of darknesse: *Ioseph* thought no weapon comparable, for the beating off his Mistresses assaults, to running away.

The first thing that God did, after he created Heaven and Earth, was, to separate light from darknesse; probably to shew, that the good should first of all separate from the evill, if they meane not again to become evil. It is not more hard to find vertue in evil company, then to misse vice. *They were mingled among the heathen* (saith the Psalmist) and what followes? *they learned their works*, *Pf. 106. 35*. *Peter* had never denied and forsworn his Master.

if he had not been in company with *Christ's* enemies : but then how soon was he changed ? Now, saith one, *If such a Cedar fell, how shall I stand ?* I will not therefore hazard the fraile potsherd (my flesh) upon the rock of evil company for any thing. *David* had never dislembed, if he had not been among the *Philistins* : which made him after (that he might wisely shun that occasion) say, *depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, for I will keep the commandments of my God, Psal. 119. 115.* intimating, that he could not otherwise : nay, how many thousands have confest at the Gallows, *I had never come to this but for evil company, which drew me to these courses ?* yea, the truth is, we can not come amongst these vipers, and not be stung by them ; for even to hear them speak, will make us either angry, or guilty ; and not to be intemperate with them for company, is a great discourtesie, if not a quarrel. Many a man had been good, that is not, if he had but kept good company.

There is a pliable disposition in all men naturally to evill ; we follow it, as Iron doth the Loadstone, by a natural and hidden propensity : our corrupt nature is like fire, which, if there be any infection in the room, drawes it streight to it self : or like Jet, which omits all precious objects, and attracts nothing but straws and dust : or, if a man hath both good and bad in his nature, either of them will fortifie, as they meet with their like ; or decline as they find a contrary : as *Samson* did in his strength, who, at first being hard enough for all the Princes of the *Philistins*, at last, by keeping *Dalilah* company, they set a boy to lead him.

Yea, suppose a man stands indifferent ; his company, whether good or evil, will work him into a new nature ; and by continuance, he shall grow up to the same height with them, as the Hop groweth to the end of the pole, be it never so high, and he himself shall do the like to others ; as one peece of Iron, being rub'd with the Loadstone, will draw another peece, even as if it were the Loadstone it self.

A good man in ill company is like a precious pearl, fallen into the mud ; which the longer it lies, the deeper still it sinks into it : for, if the force of *custome*, simple and separate be great ; the force of *custome*, copulate, and conjoynd, and collegiate, is far greater ; for their example teacheth, company comforteth, emulation quickneth, glory raiseth : so as in such places the force of *custome*, is in her exaltation : which made the mother of *Alexander*, the twenty sixth Emperor of *Rome*, so careful of her sons education, that she kept continually a guard of men to take heed, that no vicious persons came unto him, to corrupt him in evil.

It was a good conceit of *Themistocles*, and not triviall, when he set up a bill of an house, which he had to let, that he added, aye, and *there be good neighbours too* : for it shall go hard, but neighbourhood will somewhat mould the whole family into better or worse, as themselves are. The sore eye, we know, infecteth the sound : and they that sleep with dogs shall swarm with fleas : yea, a mans posterity after him, shall gain, or loose by the bargain. It were happy, the injury of a wicked man could be confined to his own bosome ; that he on the face the worse for his sins ; that it were but *self do, self have* : but as his

his lewdness, like some odious sent, is diffused through the whole room, or place where he is, and reacheth to the times, upon which he is unhappily slain: so after generations are the worse by means of him. An ill president, is like *Goodwin Sands*, which not only swallowed up his patrimony, but still continues a dangerous place, where too many have miscarried. He is a very mean person, that draws not some Clyents after him: even *Theudas* and *Judas* had their four hundreds to accompany them. One man may kindle such a fire, as thousands are not able to quench: one plague sore may infect a whole nation: and all the venome of sin is not spent in the act.

Sin among men, like the Murrain in Cattel, or scab among Sheep, is of a catching and infectious quality: and like the Plague or Leprosie, will run along from one to another: our corrupt nature is like tinder, which is kindled with the least sparke: wherefore it behoves us to avoid all provoking objects: as a man that hath Gunpowder in his house, keeps it safe from fire: and well were it for us, if lewd ones were forced to cry, as the Leper in *Israel*; *I am unclean, I am unclean.*

Every thing labours to make the thing it meets with, like it self; fire, converts all to fire; aire, exiccates and draws to it self; water, moistens and resolveth what it meetes withall; earth, changeth all that we commit to it, to her own nature. Every man will be busie in dispending that quality which is predominant in him: we can converse with nothing, but will work upon us, and by the unperceived stealth of time, assimilate us to it self: one rotten Aple will infect a whole floor: one putrid grape corrupts the whole sound cluster. The choice therefore of a mans company, is one of the most weighty actions of our lives; for our future well or ill being, depends on that election: if we choose ill, every day inclines us to worse, we have a perpetual weight hanging on us, that is ever sinking us down to vice.

Antisthenes wondred at those which were curious in buying but an earthen dish, to see that it had no cracks, nor inconveniences, and yet would be careless in the choice of friends, and take them with the flaws of vice. What was the reason (think we) that our Saviour would not suffer his weak Disciple, in the Gospel, to go and bury his dead father? *Luk. 9. 60.* It was not any avernesse to civil, much lesse filial respect and duty to Parents; yea, he preferred mercy before sacrifice; but he well knew, that when he once met with his carnal friends at the funeral, they would pervert him again, and quickly flout him out of his new Masters service, and that the Gospel should soon loose a Preacher of him. The reason why the *Raven* returned not into *Noahs* Arke, as the *Dove* did, is given by some, because it met with a dead carcase by the way.

A wise man will be wary, not only to shun sin in the action, but in the very occasion. How many, that meant not to sin, are won only by the opportunity? for occasion and our nature are like two inordinate lovers, they seldom meet, but they sin together, and every act of sin, tyes a new knot: if we keep them asunder, the harm is prevented: and it is easier to deny a guest at first, then to turn him out, having stayed a while: it is easier to keep fire from flax, then to quench it after it is on fire: a man may spit out a sparke, but when once kindled, there

is hardly any quenching of it. Why do we pray, *deliver us from evil*, but that we imply, besides all other mischiefs, that there is an *infectious* power in it, to make us evil? Let us therefore *do* what we *pray*, and *pray* that we may *do* it: yea, O Lord, free us both from speech and sight of these bawds and panders of vice, so far as is possible; if not, at least from joyning in league, or dwelling in house with, or having dependency on such.

O how many are there, that, like the Pine-tree, with their very shadow, hinder all other plants from growing under them: or, like the great mountain *Radish*, which, if it bee planted neer the Vine, causeth it to starve and wither away? Alas! it is nothing to be godly in *Abraham's* house: but for a man to dwell in the tents of *Kedar*, or to live in the Court of *Sardanapalus*; and yet to keep himself upright, is a matter of great difficulty, especially, for him that is not well rooted by time and experience. A sore new skind will fret off again, with the least rubbing; yea, the very sight of evil is dangerous, to such an one; lusting, for the most part, followes looking; as wee see in *Eve*, *Gen.* 3. 6. and *David* 2 *Sam.* 11. 2, 3. which makes *Salomon* speaking of a strange woman, advise us to keep far from her, and not once come neer the door of her house, *Prov.* 5. 8. It is a hard matter for that soul, not to fall into those vices, unto which the eyes and the eares are enured, not out of love, but custome, we fall into some offences.

We read that *Perfina*, that *Ethiopian* Queen, in *Heliodorus*, by seeing a faire picture of *Perseus* and *Andromeda*, was brought to bed of a faire white child; whereas Pope *Nicholas* the third's Concubine, by seeing of a Beare, was brought to bed of a Monster. I am sure this is true in the morall of it; which should make us equally love good company, and hate evil. I know there be in every place whole troops of evil persons; and where there are many pots boyling, there cannot but be much scum: so that a man shall find it, either impossible, or hard, never to be amongst them, or shift off their solicitations. Wherefore if at any time (as no flie is more importunate) they thrust themselves into thy conversation, doe as those which must necessarily passe by a carrion in the way; hold thy breath, be alone in a multitude, abhor to participate with them in their vices; and hasten to be out of their aire, as *Peter* did out of the high Priests hall, so soon as *Christ* looked upon him: and if they yet follow thee, turn back to them, with the Angels farewell, *inrepet te Dominus*. And lastly, if by chance, with *Peter*, thou hast taken the least soyl, or infection from these poysoned and pitchy Links, be sure to scrape or brush it off thy soul again, by prayer, examination, and humiliation: as they that come out of infected houles, aire, or wash their garments, for the more safety, Thus did *Peter*, not without cause, not without benefit and commodity.

S. 16.

IT is true, they will perswade us; that instead of being infected, we may gain by their company; and tell us, that true Crystal may touch the Toade without being poysoned; that the Diamond will lye in the fire, without being consumed; that fish may live in salt waters, and yet retain a fresh tast; that though rust will fret into the hardest steel, yet it doth not eate into the Emerald; that though the Load-stone draweth Iron after it, yet it cannot stir Gold,

nor the Jet steel, though it doth straw; that though the Sun hardens clay, yet it softens wax; that if a Ship hath a sure Anchor, it may lye safe any where; neither is it absolutely unlawfull for us to keep them company, seeing *Christ* kept company with *Publicans* and sinners of all sorts.

Ans. Here are good words, but no security; which therefore an experienced man gives the hearing of, but stands (the while) upon his own guard. No charity binds us to a trust of those whom we have found faithlesse. Credulity upon weak grounds, after palpable disappointments, is the daughter of folly. He that hath once broken his faith, will not easily be trusted. I know Physicians may converse with Leprous persons, uninfected; but then they must have stronger Antidotes, then their natures give them, or else themselves shall stand in the same need, and of Physicians become Patients, and need Physick: so that may be lawfull, in a sage and stayed person, which is unfit for an ungovern'd eye once to looke upon. We read, *Gen. 19. 17.* that *Lot* and his wife, were forbidden to look back at the destruction of *Sodom*; when to *Abraham* it was left at large, and without restraint, he being a man of better ruled affections. Again, I know the Devil cannot hurt me, so long as God is with me: as the best Load-stone cannot draw Iron unto it, if the Diamond be by: yea, the very fear of God, and thought that he looketh on, as one spake of grave *Cato*, will keep a man from yeilding to their temptations; as it did *Ioseph*, touching his Mistresses allurements: and that faith, as it is no coward, so it is ever victorious: what then? Though faith be confident, yet it is not impudent; it knows a guard of *Angels will keep us in all our wayes*, but not in our wandrings: though it may be lawful to come among them, yet wisdom forbears some lawfull things, because they may be occasions of things unlawful. He that abstaines from nothing that is lawfull, will soon be brought to do that which is unlawful. The note which comes too neer in the Margent, will skip into the Text, at the next impression. He that will go as near the ditch as he can, will at some time or other fall in. He that will do all that he may, will sometimes do what he ought not. It is hard for the best man to say how far he will be tempted. If a man will put himself among *Philistins*, he cannot promise to come forth innocent; or if he do, that soul which lives among thornes, shall hardly thrive in Grace. How many have fallen into a fashion of swearing, scoffing, drinking, out of the usual practise of others: as those that live in an ill ayre, are infected with diseases? A man may passe through *Ethiopia* unchanged, but he cannot dwell there, and not be discoloured. When once a man gives himself over to be the companion of vice, in the end he becomes the very slave of vice. The Oxe being tyed to the Figg-tree, loseth his strength. Many strokes overthrow the strongest Oke. Many drops of raine, though never so soft, pierce the hardest Marble; yea, even the flint stone. And let graces be never so well fixt in a mans heart, yet he may soon have them consumed and wasted this way, if he take not heed: as Snow and Ice cannot be so hard congealed, but they will melt, if they come to the fire. And little do our peremptory resolvers in this case know, or consider, either the infective power of evil, or the treachery of their own hearts, in receiving it, or the importunity of wicked deceivers, in obstruding it: they are the worst

Armour of proof

An Egg covered with salt (as Philoſophers teach) hath the meate of it conſumed, whilſt the ſhell is whole. And we reade of many Towns, which have in time been undermined, even with the moſt impotent and weake Creatures, as one in *Spaine*, with Coneyes; in *Theſſalia* with Moles; in *France* with Frogs; in *Africa* with Flies.

Many an one receives poiſon, and knowes not when he took it. Many breathe in this world, like men ſleeping in a boate, are carried down the ſtream, even to their graves, without waking, to think where they are.

No man proves extreemly evil on the ſudden: through many inſenſible declinations do we fall from vertue. Sathan's agents are ſtill ſcattering his fire darts, among the Army of *Iſrael*; and when they light upon wood, they kindle; when upon flax, they flame; when upon gunpowder, they blow up all. They therefore that love ſuch intricate and perplexed walkes, had need of Iron ſhoes.

True it is, that *Chriſt* conſeſed and kept company with *Publicans* and ſinners (as the Phyſitian with the ſick) to heale their ſoules: neither did they make him worſe, but he made them better: but as true it is, that he was without the level or temptation; and ſo is no general warrant. I will therefore not only ſhun evil, but the means to come to it; and to avoid hurt, I will keep my ſelf out of ſhot: neither will I preſume, being but a man, to follow my maſter in that which he did as God. Indeed, many are ſo preſumptuous of their ſtrength, that they think they can come in any company, and yet come off cleare: but he which comes to ſave one drowning, muſt be ſtronger then the other, or elſe he will be drowned himſelf.

Pliny reports, that a Family neare *Rome* would go upon live coles without being burnt: had it hereupon been neceſſary for others to put the ſame in practice? no, neither is it neceſſary for us to do that herein which our Saviour did. Our minds have not that ballaſt in them, which his had, and ſo are ſooner endangered, by the floods of wickedneſs.

Secondly, whereas they object: that we may gaine by their company: I confeſſe it poſſible, for even the moſt venomous and ravenous things that are, have their commodities, as well as their annoyances: And the Cocke by ſcraping in a dunghill, did once find a Jewel: *Virgil* from *Ennius's* dunge did Gold extract: and Apothecaries of Vipe ſleſh can make an Antidote againſt poiſon: an Harlots face may ſuggett chaſtneſſe: and a ſinful ſurſet may prove an Antidote for ſin: yea, as external cold kindles the heate of the ſtomack: ſo we find it recorded in holy Writ, that ſome, by a ſpiritual *Antiperiſtiſis*, have grown hotter in their zeale, by being encompaſſed with the outward cold of wicked and irreligious company: like Roſes and Lillies, which flouriſh the more for being beſet with Thornes: and Violets, which are the ſweeter and more odoriferous, for being beſet with Garlick and Onions; for as much as they ſuck and draw all the ill ſavours of the ground unto them. Thus it ſared with *Lot*, who ſerved God better among the beaſtly *Sodomites*, then when he was ſeparated from them. And ſome others there are no doubt, who, as they owe not this grace to themſelves, ſo they are more for wonder, then imitation. For if *Dauid* found a guard in the Lyons Den, ſhall another thruſt himſelf therein for ſafety?

elter? And if *Peter* walkt upon the pavement of the water, did the rest of the Disciples step forth and follow him? No.

Ob. But say some. By keeping them company, we may winne them, and happily convert their soules.

Ans. I answer. Hope not so much to convert them; as fear that they will pervert thee, for vertue is not so alluring as vice: the one spreads it self, like boyson in a vessel; the other is not half so disperfive. Sin, and *Hagar*, are more fruitful then vertue and *Sarah*: falshood, more successful then truth. The sore eye infecteth the sound: the sound will not mend the sore. Vinegar will mar wine; wine will not mend vinegar, Infection is spreading and catching: health is not so. An hundred sound persons shall sooner catch the plague, from one infected person; then he receive his health from them.

Salomon that wonder of Wilddom, might think by joyning in affinity with his neighbour Princes, and marrying their Daughters, to win those Heathens to the Kingdom of God: but he was deceived, for he could do no good upon them; they wrought him too much evil. And doth not experience teach us, that the good are sooner perverted by the bad, then the bad converted by the good? even as a tainted ayre doth more easily infect a sound body, then an wholesome can clear the sick.

We read of certain Magnetical, or Adamantine Rockes, in the Iles of *Monipole*, which draw all ships unto them, that have any Iron pinnes, holding them so fast, that they are not able to stir: evil society, are such Rockes; holy men, the ships; naturall and inbred corruption, the Iron pinnes: he that will be safe, let him keep far enough from such Rockes.

A good man, joynd in league with one that is wicked; is like a living man, bound to a dead corps, which will sooner suffocate him, then he revive that: or, like an Ickle, can endure the rough northern wind of persecution well enough, but melteth with the heate of the Sun, sweet allurements of the world, and the flesh. The children of God are, as it were, dead to their lusts; but if they should tempt God, by a too familiar society with the vicious; who knowes, but as live coles will kindle dead ones; so their evil speeches and actions may kindle and enflame them with the love and liking of Iwdnesse? Indeed, as one said to his suppliant, *make me a Diviner, and I will make thee rich*: so may a good man say to a vicious; *make me Angelicall*, that is, incapable of being seduced, and I'll do my best to make thee a Convert.

§. 27.

THirdly. Our entirenesse with wicked men scoffes us, not only in their sins, but oftentimes in their punishments also; as it fared with the 36. men which were slain before *Ayc*, for *Achan's* sake, *Joshua* 7. where we see the innocencie of so many thousand *Israelites* was not so prevalent, to expiate his one sin; as his one sin was, to taint and bring judgment upon all *Israel*. If the Stork be taken damageteeant with the Cranes, she is enwrapped in the same net, and cannot complain that she is surpris'd. He that walketh with the wise (saith *Salomon*) shall be wise; but a companion of fools, shall be afflicted, *Pro.* 13. 20. This *Augustine* well observes, speaking of the religious, taken amongst the rest of the *Goths*, *Fure amaram vitam sentire, qui*

de cantibus amari esse noluerunt. And hereupon Moses separates *Isracl* from *Orab*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, saying, depart from the Tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs; least ye perish with them; Num. 16. 26. And doth not God himself say to his people, touching *Babylon*, Go out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues? Rev. 18. 4. Where sin is let in, punishment will not be kept out. Yea, if *Lot* had stayed in *Sodom*, he had been destroyed: if his Sons would have gone out, they had every man escaped.

Indeed, we cannot be too far off from such company; and it were happy if they were kept by themselves; for so long as the infected person is shut up, his plague doth not spread. And besides the benefit of our safety, wickedness would soon be ashamed of it self, if it were not for the encouragement of companions. Solitariness is the fittest Antidote for spiritual infection. It were happy for the wicked man, if he would be separated from himself. *Antisthenes* would often say, *It was a great oversight, sithence they purged their Wheat from Darnel, and their warres from cowardly Souldiers, that they purged not their common wealth from lewd and wicked people.*

Or if our persons escape scot-free, yet we may suffer in our estates, and be crost in our most weighty designs and determinations, only for joyning in league or friendship with Gods enemies. *Because thou hast joyned thy self with Abaziah (saith Eleazar to Jehosaphat) the Lord hath broken thy works;* and the Ships were broken, that they were not able to go to *Tarshish*, 2 Chro. 20. 37.

But admit they can not infeeble us, either in their sin or punishment: yet their society will be a shrewd vexation to us. As let a religious man fall into their company, as an honest man may fall into the hands of thieves, they will conspire how to afflict his eyes, with unchast visions; his ears, with fearful oaths, his unwilling appetite, with drunken healths; which even a civilized Pagan would abhor. We read that *Clitemachus* the wrestler (though a great company-keeper, yet) if he had heard but one filthy word, would presently depart. How was just *Lot* vexed with the uncleanly conversation of his wicked neighbours? *Sodom* was worse then a Jaile to his righteous soule: and report lyes, if our Jailes be not much like to *Sodom*, the very dens of mischief, the Scholes of wickednesse: a Malefactor learns more vilany there, then ever he knew before: drunkenness and blasphemy, usurpe the place of mortification and humility.

Or lastly, if their society be not a vexation to our minds; at least it will be a great disparagement to our names: every one will conclude, almost infallibly, such as our company is, such is our disposition. The common Proverb is, *like will to like.* And, *Birds of a feather, will flock together.* When *Iephtah* was himself in banishment, there gathered to him idle fellows, such as himself, Judges 11. 3. When *David* was in trouble, and vexed in minde himself, their flockt unto him all those that were in trouble, vexed in mind, or that were in debt; even four hundred of them, to the Cave of *Adullam*, 1 Sa. 22. 2. Yea, our Saviour meets no less then ten Lepers in one knot. Fellowship is that we all naturally affect, though it be in Leprosie: even Lepers will flock to their fellows,

om lows. where shall we find one spiritual leper alone? drunkards, prophane persons, hereticks, will be sure to consort with their matches. And hereupon the Lacedaemonians, when they would certainly be informed, what the disposition and behaviour of any one was, would wisely inquire with what persons, they were linked in fellowship. And indeed, he that makes himself a companion of all, sells his reputation very cheape: it being as great an indecorum, for a holy Christian to be in the company of gracelesse persons, as it is for a reverend Divine to sit upon the Stage in a publike Threator; or an old man to dance with little children in the streets.

Base company (saith one) *kills both our fame, and our soules*: it gives us wounds, which will never admit of healing. How many have irrecoverably lost their good names, by keeping company with suspected persons? and whether the report be true or false, it is no easie thing to disprove a slander, for like an unruly spirit once raised, 'tis hard to conjure down again. A mans good name is much easier kept, then recovered.

And thus you see, that *evil company endangers our soules*: or could our soules be free, yet our persons are in danger; or could our soules and persons both be safe, yet our *estates* are in jeopardy, or could our souls, bodies and estates be secure, yet our *fame* would suffer, and our *good name* lye at the stake. Wherefore, &c.

§. 28.

Fourthly. But admit we could keep them company without harm; yet this inconvenience would ensue, their company would bereave us of much good, which otherwise we should enjoy, being alone; it faring with the godly wife, as with Saint Ambrose, who was wont to say, *I am never lesse alone, then when I am all alone, for then I can enjoy the presence of my God without interruption*. They are able to say, as Dubartus, and (before him) Scipio, *I have never better company, then when I have no company, for then can I freely entertain my own thoughts, and converse with all the learned, which have been in former ages*.

Antisthenes being asked what fruit he had reaped of all his study? made answer, *I have learned by it, both to live, and walk with my selfe*. And *Alphonfus* King of Arragon being demanded, what company he liked best? replied, *Bookes, for these* (saith he) *without feare, or flattery, or any reward, tell me faithfully all that I desire to know*. *Cicero* was, and I am of his mind, and though I be no Hermit, to sit away my daies in a dull Cell, yet will I choose, rather to have no companion then a bad one.

When *Cato Utican*, in vacation times, and at his best leisure, went to recreate himself in the country, he used to cary with him the best Philosophers, and choicest bookes. *Algrius* an Italian Martyr said, *He had rather be in prison with Cato, then with Caesar in the Senate house*: so was it more comfortable, to be with *Philpot* in his Cole-house, then with *Bonner* in the Palace: *Boner's* conscience made his Palace a Cole-house, and a dungeons; whiles *Philpot's* made the Cole-house a Palace. The state of grace is Heaven upon earth; and he that knows the sweetness of Gods presence, will deem it more tollerable to be ever alone, then never able to be so.

Armor of proof

When I read of *Hiero* the Tyrant of *Syracusa*, and other such, that gave over their Kingdoms, to live a solitary life, I somewhat wonder: I should not, to hear of a religious and Christian King that did so. It is impossible for the natural man to be so merry, in company; as the believer alone; yea, saith *S. Augustine*, the teares of those that pray, are sweeter then the joys of the Theater. Indeed, a witty jest may make a man laugh more, and lower: but he who hath an inheritance fallen to him, feels a more solid joy within: so he that enjoys his Saviour, and hath the assistance of Heaven, is truly merry at the heart, and keeps *Hilary Tearme* all his life. And indeed, nothing in the world is worth envie, besides the condition of a true Christian.

But to what end doe I tell a blind man, how glorious and bright a creature the Sun is? or a poor man, what summes of money are in the Kings Exchequers? To so many as are unrenewed I speake in Parables, *Revel. 2. 17.* Yea, this seemes to them a *Paradox*, that the people of God should be a merry people: for contrariwise, they dream of nothing but solitarinesse, and melancholly: as the common people thought *Tulli* to be most idle, when he studied most: or as the Husbandman in *Æsop*e objected idlenesse to the Poë: but as he replied, *I am never so idle as in thy company*, so may the religious, we are never so solitary, never so melancholly; as when in society with you that are vicious. This was *David's* case, which maketh him cry out, *Wo is me, that I must remain in Mesheck, and dwell in the Tents of Kedar*: he found it a heavy yoke to be yoked with irreligious companions.

And a double reason may be given of it, though we fear not to suffer either in our persons, goods, or good names (as before you have it.) For first, the soule that lives among thornes, shall hardly thrive, they are such Backbiters to a godly life, that they will do what they can, to hinder our goodness to Heaven, and the goodness of Heaven to us; they will wither all our good parts and qualities which are in us; like an evil North-wind, they blow upon the buds of our graces, and nip them.

2. Secondly, It would make a mans heart to bleed, to hear and consider, how swearing, blaspheming, cursed speaking, railing, slandering, quarrelling, contending, jesting, mocking, scoffing, flattering, lying, dissembling, vain, corrupt, and filthy scolding, scurrilous, loose and idle talking, doth overflow with them in all places: so that such as fear God, had better be any where then in the company of most men. Now I were mad if I should so affect company, as to live voluntarily where vexations shall daily salute me.

Indeed, a man is not rightly said to live, untill he hath abandoned wicked society. *Similis* having lived seven yeers apart from the World, after a long time spent in a military lite, he left this Epitaph behind him, *Here lies old Similis, yet one that lived but seven yeers*, This made *Frederick* the third, Elector *Palatine*, when some such friends of his desired his company, to answer, *I have lived enough to you; let me now live to my self, and with my Lord Christ*, Yea, *Saint Augustine*, ten dayes before he dyed, desired none might come to him, that so, in that time, he might the better fit himself for God. And indeed soule can never enjoy God, that is not sometimes retired.

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traying fancies : that we could , after so long time spent in the lusts of the flesh and pride of life , bring home our cogitations and intentions unto our selves , shake off these violent hold-fasts , bid our companions farewell , which have too long engaged our soules , and estranged us from our selves.

But when we are so welded , combined , and glewed to the world , it is no easie matter to make a safe retreat : it is a fleeing to some to be sundred ; thereby you pul away some peece of themselves.

In this case , what we cannot do all at once , let us gain upon our selves by degrees ; go back it by it ; first , block up one passage , then another. Will you know what course *Demostheness* took in this case ? He , to the end that his acquaintance and nearest friends might not (by carying him abroad , according to their custome) withdraw him from his study and books , caused the hair of his head to be shaved off ; and after took an order , that they should not peep out , until he had shook off his consorts , by continually making them loose their labours. It were happy for our young students , if they would a little imitate him ; if they were not overmuch affected and addicted to company keeping ; if they would but consider , that friends are the thieves of time , the most precious jewel they can part withall.

§. 29.

But here it will be objected. That we are melancholly persons , strayers from the drove of mankind , and whereas nature hath made us sociable creatures , in making us men , religion hath altered to a crazied disposition , whereby we are mispleasing to all , as all to us.

To this is answered. Suppose it were true (but I shall in place more convenient prove , that the religious only enjoy true mirth , and that worldly mirth is more talked of then felt , spiritual joy more felt then talk'd of , though I may appeale to any mans conscience , that hath been softned with the unction of grace , and truly *tasted the powers of the world to come*) yet they think it is better being a good Christian , then a good fellow ; and hold it far better , in good sadness to be saved with a few , as *Noah* was in the *Arke* , then in good fellowship , with the multitude , to be drowned in sin , and damned for company.

We are content (saith one) to passe , through somewhat more unsociably , into happiness ; it sufficeth we shall meet with good company , at our journeys end , in the Kingdom of Heaven , even an innumerable company of Saints and Angels.

The men of the World practise , what once a Jester spake , who , when a great Lord asked him , whether he would go to Heaven or Hell ? Answered , *to hell , for there (quoth he) I shall be sure to meet your Lordship , and the greatest part of mine acquaintance.* But it is not so with the true Christian : he little loves *Christ* , that will not follow him without company : and his zeale is cold to Heaven , whom the example of numbers can turn another way. Wherefore let us say , as much as *Peter* said ; and do more , then *Peter* did ; *though all men shoul forsake thee , yet will I not leave thee* , O Saviour : neither magnitude of Princes , nor multitude of people , shall prevail with me.

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119. 63. *I am a companion to all them that feare thee, and keep thy precepts for the godly mans chief delight is in the Saints, and such as excell in vertue* Psa. 16. 3. Yea, and their fellowship is so good, profitable, and delectable, that as *Synefus* was of opinion, that King *Hieron* got more by *Simonides* acquaintance, then *Siminides* did by his; and as we read that *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, and *Nebuchadnezzar* were more pleased by *Joseph*, *David*, and *Daniel*, then *Daniel*, *David*, and *Joseph* were by them: so I perwade my self, great persons would find themselves more then requited, if they would vouchsafe the company of some poor Saints: for a wise and holy Christian (like his Lord and Master) where-soever he goes, makes better cheare then he finds, in an happy exchange of spiritual repast for bodily. Yea, as *Plato* accounted it one of the four great privileges, for which he was especially bound to nature, that he lived in the time of *Socrates*: so they should think it none of the least favours, for which they were bound to bless God, that they enjoyed so religious and holy society.

It is true indeed, there is a supposed good fellowship, to which religion is an enemy; because it is an enemy to this holy fellowship of the Saints: and good reason, the one are to the other, as Wolves are to the Lambs: now is it any marvel if the Lambs care not greatly for the company of the Wolves? the Lambe would not willingly be alone; yet it is far better when solitary, then in a Wolvish society.

Generous minds will associate with their matches and equals, or none: as *David* being a King, when he was expulsed his own Country, resorts to none but Kings: for first he goeth to *Achis*, King of *Gath*; then to the King of *Moab*; 1 *Sam.* 21. 10. and 1 *Sam.* 22. 3.

Neither are our ding-thirfts, who lavish out their estates, and throw the house out at windows (as we use to say) good fellowes, though they call themselves so: for good fellowes and evil men are incompatible; like *Simeon* and *Levi*, sworn brothers, but brethren in evill; which is too evil a brotherhood, for an honest man to make one in, or (indeed) a wise man: for is not hee a fool, that will sell Heaven for company, as a great many true drunkards doe? For my own part, if I have good company, I will cherish them as *Lot* did his Angels, which were sent for guardians: if I have any bad, I will studie to loose them, least by keeping them, I loose my self in the end.

§. 30.

Fifthly. Another reason why we should separate our selves from their society is, that according to the Apostles rule, so far as is possible, we may have peace with all men, which is no way obtainable, but by a separation. A wicked man (saith *Salomon*) is abomination to the just: and he that is upright in his way, is abomination to the wicked, *Prov.* 29. 27. if so, either no communion, or no peace.

Believers, and such as are enemies to the Crosse of Christ, can never be reconciled, at least in heart. What communion can righteousness have with unrighteousness? You may as well tye a sure knot between a Cobweb and a Cable as a true and fast love-knot, between the child of God and a wicked man. These two yoked together, agree like the Harp and the Harrow: they are as suitable, as a wooden Legg, and a Thigh of flesh: which makes the Apostle *Rom.* 12. 18.

against evil Society.

in enjoying us to *have peace with all men*, to add, *if it be possible*: and in another place to say, *be not unequally yoked with infidels*, for as we should not be yoked with infidels; so we should not be yoked with common drunkards, and swearers, nor with Atheists, which are no better then infidels; for that also is to be unequally yoked, unless we be Atheists too.

As the *Jews* might not *confort* with the *Canaanites*: so we may not *confort* with them, which are like *Canaanites*. Wise *Salomon* chargeth us from God, that wee should not keep company with gluttons and drunkards, *Proverbs 23. 20.* and the Apostle enjoyneth us, *not to have any fellowship, nor so much as eat with a drunkard*, *1 Cor. 5. 11.* and that we should have no fellowship with these unfruitful works of darknesse, or, if unwittingly and unwillingly we be thrust into any such society, we must not imitate, but *reprove them*, *Ephesians 5. 11.* and wee profess our selves the servants of God: now they are bad servants, who will keep company with their masters enemies, especially, after he hath streightly charged them to the contrary.

Alas! what should we do in the presence of base persons, when even our sober ignorance, in ill courses, is more then disesteemed of the world? Yea, when it is not enough for them to be bad themselves, except they raile at the good? When if there be one in a company, that abhors impious language, they will blaspheme on purpose to vex him? When they will think themselves slighted, if they be not sent away drunk? When to depart sober, is held incivility? And we cannot talk idly enough, nor do lewdly enough, to bear their company; we can neither say as they say, nor be silent when we see and hear their balenels. As whom would it not stir, to hear oaths strive for number, with words; scotts, with oaths; vain speeches, with both? we love neither to bite, nor fawn; we can not forbear to speak the naked truth; which if we do, will breed a quarrel. As for instance; one jests pleasantly with his Maker; another, makes himself sport with Scripture; a third, fills his mouth with oaths of sound; a fourth, scoffs at the religious; one, speaks villany; another, laughs at it; a third, defends it; one, makes himself a swine, another, a divell. Now who, that is not all earth, can endure it? Yea, who, having grace, can bear such wickedness, and feelerh not some spark of holy indignation arise in him, while he thinks of it? O, who having not lost his spiritual sense, can endure the favour of such noysome and stinking breath, as their rotten lungs send forth. Well born children are touched to the quick, with the injuries of their Parents; and not thus to be moved, is to confess our selves bastards. Indeed, men of steel stomachs can digest any discourse, though never so courd; but the gracious know, that as they must render an account for every idle word, so likewise for their idle silence; for in this case not to reprove them either by word, or gesture, is to do the same things in judgment and conscience, which the other doth actually. Every evil we see doth either vex, or infect us. The very sight of sin makes a man either sad, or guilty: if wee see it, and be not sorrowful, we are sinful. If *Lot* had not been vexed with the beastly *Sodomites*, God had been vexed with him: yea, in such a case not to be very angry, is to make God very angry. *Ely* heard of his sons impiety, no doubt with grief enough, but not with anger enough; therefore he is punished with hearing of their destruction, that was too

emisse in hearing of their transgression. It is easie to be guilty of anothers wickednesse, even our very permission appropriates crimes to us : we need no more guiltiness of any sin, then our willing tolleration. All sins which we give allowance to, being committed, or not hinderd by us, if we may, are ours, as if we committed them : first, Commanders ; 2. Abbettors ; 3. Counsellors ; 4. Consenters ; 5. Commenders ; 6. Connivers ; 7. Concealers ; 8. not hinderers ; each of these will be found guilty before Gods Tribunal. What saith the Prophet to King *Jehosaphat*, *wouldst thou help the wicked*, and not only so, but *wouldst thou love them that hate the Lord* ? therefore for this thing the wrath of the Lord is upon thee, *2 Chron. 19. 2.* We need do no more to bring the wrath of God upon us, then even to love and favour those which hate him.

How much better then to oppose thy friend by reprovng him, then that God should reprove thee for being at one with him.

But this is no *friendly part* : yes, the Scripture affirms, that not to tell one's Brother plainly of his fault, at least, if there be probability of doing good, is to hate him in his heart, *Levit. 19. 17.* And Philosophy tels us, *that is truly perfect love, which, to profit and do good, feareth not to hurt or offend ; that admonitions and corrections are the chiefest offices of friendship.* *Diogenes* when they called him Dog, for his sharp kind of rebuking, would answer, *That other Dogs used to bite their enemies, but he his friends, for their greater good.* And *Scipio*, the elder, when his friends, for so doing, turned his enemies, was able to say, *I have given mine enemies as much cause to love me, as my friends.*

Phocion when a friend of his would have cast himself away, would not suffer him, saying, *I was made thy friend for this purpose* : and to King *Antipater*, *thou canst not have me both for thy friend and flatter.* Indeed, a flattering friend is a bitter enemy, yea (as one sweetly) *no enemy can be so mortal, as these officious Clyents, whose flattery sothes a man up in wickedness !* for they are traytors to the soul, and by a pleasing violence kill the best part eternally. Whence *Euripides* exhorts men to get such friends, as would not spare to dislike them, saying, *friends are like wines, those that being new are hard and harsh, prove best ; the most pleasing ; are least lasting* : and indeed, he that loves not such a friend, hates himself.

A wise man will say to his friend, love heartily, and then speak what thou wilt. And for a man not to chide his friend, least he should offend him, is as if (when he were ready to be drowned) he should fear to catch him by the hair of the head, lest he should loose a few of them. Wherefore either let them abide thee, no friend to their faults, or no friend to themselves.

And what if *admonition* and *reproof* be as *unwelcome* to thy friend, as water into a Ship ? What if it sound no better to him, then musick out of tune ; or taste no sweeter, then bitter pills, which sick men take with an unwilling willingness ? Wilt thou neglect the office of a friend, to avoid the suspicion of an enemy ?

Indeed, if thou meet with a contentious fool, thou shalt do wisely, in not answering whatsoever he objects : for it is more policy and discretion to gain a friend without trouble, then a foe with it : and our Saviour saith, *give ye not that which is holy to Dogs, neither cast ye your pearl before Swine ; least they tread*

tread them under their feet, and turning again all to rent you, *Matth. 7. 6.*

Again, as in Gods and their own behalf we are bound to reprove them : so in our neighbours also, to whom, in this case, we owe a duty : for, admit we are in company when, and where our brothers good name is taken away by false report; it is our duty to defend the truth, in his behalf : we must neither backbite others, nor be willing to give eare unto backbiters of others. It was an honest speech of one ; as *I will be my present friends self, so I'll be my absent friends deputy, to say for him what he would, and cannot speak for himself.*

But thou wilt ask me. What need men trouble themselves with that which so little concerns them ?

My answer shall be such another question. What needed *Moses* to have afflicted himself with the afflictions of others, that he might work their deliverance, when himself was at ease and pleasure in the court of *Pharaoh* ? what needed *Fonathan* have purchased his fathers displeasure, and brought his own life in jeopardy, that he might justifie *David* in his uprightness, and save his life ? What needed *Calvin*, in the year 1556, when *Perin* had conspired against the estate of *Geneva*, have run into the midst of their naked swords, to appease the tumult ? what needs the hand cast it self betwixt a blow and the head, though it be cut off by this mean ? What needs the eye serve more to the use of the other members, in being watchfull rightly to direct them, than for it self ? A good heart cannot abide to be happy alone ; which is a religious answer, to a reasonable question unreasonably moved. Yea, admit it were not a duty for one member to seek the good of another, or of the whole, and that God had not enjoyned us so to do : I am sure it is a pardonable fault, to do lesse good to our selves, that we may do more good to, and for others.

But suppose we offend them not this way ; yet we shall another, if we keep them company. The naturall man conceits of himself, far beyond what another esteems him : and in case he finds he is undervalued, will flye in your face, and perhaps do you more mischief, then can easily be repaired : as that was done in one quarter of an hour by our first Parents, which tended to the ruin of them, and all mankind. It is usual with drunkards to kisse when they meet, and kill when they part. Drunken *Alexander* killed *Clytus*, for whom sober *Alexander* would have killed himself. The *Danes* and *Normayes* once purposing for *England*, fell drunk on shipboard, and so slasht one another, that there was an end of their voyage. Out of their gallant disposition, you shall have one kill another, upon the interpretation of a word ; a manifest confession, that their life is not much worth, sith they will sell it so good cheap : yea, there are not wanting of them that resemble *Fimbria* of *Rome*, who meeting a Citizen that he hated, gave him a deadly thrust into the body with his sword, and the next day entered an action against him, that he had received but part of his blad into his body and not all, as he meant it.

Yea, perhaps they may make you to do that which you never dreamt of : like *Herod*, who cut off *John Baptist's* head, only to answer the expectation of the standers by, *Matth. 14. 9.* As for flattery it never wants welcome, while self-love, is at home : but the plain dealing man cannot live among these Vipers, and not be stung by them : yea, he lives most in trouble, that most seeks to have peace with them by a familiarity.

Well then, if they are so offensive to the stomach of our company, that they will not let us be at peace; our best way will be to spew them out, to deal with our old vicious companions, as the Fox in the Fable did by his Flees: who wading backward into the water, by degrees, drew them all into a lock of Wooll, which he had in his mouth, and then left it swimming; even leave them, without taking leave of them; or if you like not to tear friendship asunder upon the sudden, you may unfow it by little and little. He that would not continue a friend, may but neglect him, and have his aym.

S. 31.

Ob. But I hear none boast so much of *peace*, as the *ungodly*; nor none taxed so with *contention*, as the *religious*.

Answer. Boast of it they may, but it is apparent that *the way of peace they have not so much as known*: indeed, they have some kind of agreement among themselves; and so have Serpents, and Beares, and Wolves: it is a rare thing, to see one Wolf devour, or fight with another: yea, *they have made a covenant with death, and are at agreement with Hell*, *Isai.* 28. 15. and yet: *as there is no peace to the wicked, Isa.* 57. 21. so there is *no peace among the wicked*; for every combination in evil, is *rebellion*, and not *peace*; rather a *conspiracy*, then a concord; like the agreement of *Abalom* and *Ahitophel*, combining together against *David*; or of *Herod* and *Pilate*, conspiring against *Christ*; or of the false Apostles, plotting against *Paul*, so meeting in malice to do mischief: but a godly dissension is better then such a wicked peace.

Neither can any wonder, that wicked men do so *conspire* in evil, that there is such *unanimity* in the broachers & abettors of it; if he but take notice of those Devils, which being many in substance, were yet one in name, action, habitation, even a whole Legion in one man, *Mark.* 5. 9. all the praise of *concord* is in the subject; if that be holy, the consent is angelicall; if sinfull, devilish; true *peace* is to have *peace* with God, *war* with our lusts, *Rom.* 5. 1. and 7. 22. 23. *peace* with vertue, *war* with vice: whereas they have *peace* and are at league with their sins, but are at *war* with God, and good men all at once: but a just *war* is a thousand times better, then such an ill conditioned *peace*; yea, it no way deserves the name of *peace*, except we be at enmity with the Serpent, at unity within our selves: we ought so to be at *peace* with men, as that we do not *war* with God and his graces: *peace* must be followed with *holinesse*, *Heb.* 12. 14. Wherefore *Zachary* joyneth faith, *peace*, and truth together, *Zach.* 8. 16. and *St. Paul*, *peace* and *righteousness*, *peace* and *edification*, *peace* and *joy in the Holy Ghost*, *Rom.* 14. 17. 19. 20. &c. Thus the Scripture sets us our bounds for *peace*, which we may not passe; and shews that ungodly men are not guilty of this grace; that they do but talk of *peace*, not practise it.

But suppose we could enjoy *peace* in their company; yet we can never expect to have their *loves*: for drunkards only *love* drunkards, and one wicked man another; but care not a rush for any that are good: being like *Phalaris* the Tyrant, who would never grant any request, except it were to a dissolute woman, but such he never denied. *Likeness* we know is the cause of *love*, and *love* the cause of *likeness*; whereas the believer and the unbeliever are altogether *unlike*; the one being *crucified and dead to the world*, *Gal.* 6. 14. but *made alive in Christ*

Christ, 1 Cor. 15. 22. The other being *spiritually dead*, even while they are *alive*. 1 Tim. 5. 6.

We seldome see different dispositions entirely loving : for hence growes the height offriendship, when two similiary souls do blend in their commixions, and hence it is, that two friends are said to come into *Vulcan's shop*, to beg this boon of him : that he would either beate them on his *Anvile*, or melt them in his *Fornace* both into one, the which he granted. Its *likeness* that makes the true love knot of *friendship* : when we find another of our own disposition, it appears the same soul in a divided body. Nature that makes us love our selves, makes us, with the same reason, love those that are like us. A *friend* is a more sacred name, then a *Brother*, Pro. 18. 24. For what availes it to have the bodies from the same original, when the souls within them differ ?

And yet some (*Rehoboam-like*) passing over the religious, will joyn themselves with ungodly persons ; like as some put away honest wives, and go to harlots : wherein they deal as wisely, as if a man should cast away his fleshy leg, and set on another of wood.

Causa patrocini non bona peior erit.

Or admit thou shouldst enjoy a wicked mans *love* ; it is but mercenary, base, and inconstant, and so not worth the having. Indeed, there was never such abject and servile prostitutions of presentations, as life, soul, devotion, adoration, servant, slave, &c. as there is now amongst our drunkards and roarsers, and what love they expresse to one, they profess to all ; every one they know, or salute, is their friend : but friendship so distracted, like as the *River Ganges* was by *Gyrus*, into 365. brooks, both looses her name and nature : a lover of so many, never loves any.

Or, admit a drunkard do *love* thee : either he *loves* thee for his *own sake*, because he hath some pleasure, or profit, or credit by thee, (as prosperity procurerh friends, no lesse then adversity proveth them) which is, with *Craterus*, to love the King, rather, then with *Ephastion*, to love *Alexander* : now I do not hold him worthy thankses, that professeth mee kindnesse for his own ends.

Or secondly, he *loves* only thy *body* or *natural parts*, which is but the worst peece of thee ; and love to the body, is but the body of love ; the soule of love, is the love of the soule.

Neither doth he truly love, that loves the body more then the mind and soul, or common gifts before saving graces ; this love as it is never long liv'd, so it is oft but feigned ; as you shall have drunkards and dissembling polititians salute one another, with *God save you*, at their meeting ; and with one another hanged, at their parting ; *Italian-like*, they will be glorious and complemental in their invitations, but if you accept of their offer, they will hate you for it ever after. A drinking friendship, is but a drunken friendship : and beleve it, thou wilt find those friends firmest, that thy vertues purchase thee : these will love thee, when thy wealth is gone : whereas those that be won without desert, will also be lost without a cause : you need but be an Arbitrator between two such friends to make them both your enemies : things that differ in their end, will surely part in their way : now thy end, is to gain him ; his end, to make a gain of thee : for let the passage of profit be stopt, his love is likewise at a stand :

Y^e you deserved never so well from him, the deniall of one favour, nay, a health, shall drown the memory of many fore-performed ones : which is all one as if for the abortion of one child, a man should kill all the former issue whereas the good mans thanks for old favours, lives even in the blows of injury or can you not feed these vermine as you have done, away they go ; like a Sun Dial, you shall be no longer regarded, then you are shined on by prosperity yea, Rats run not faster away from an house on fire ; nor lice from a dead body then they from poverty : and if ever it be your misery to stand in need of them look for no other requitall, then *Job* had of his friends, whom he compares to a deceitful Brook, which in winter is hard frozen with cold, in Summer dried up with heat ; between winter and Summer passing away, always deceitful, never of use, *Job* 6. 14. to 19.

Yea, a man may say of such friends, as a learned Antiquary said of *Rumney Marsh*, *bad in Winter, hurtfull in Summer, never good* : nay, this comparison falls short, for thou hast sped well, if such friends prove not dangerously hurtfull, as well as helpelesse. Have I not known some of them resemble the Snake, which when a kind Husbandman had taken out of the cold, and cherished in his bosome, and she had recovered her lively heate, and was grown lusty, singled out him ungratfully to trie her first sting upon ? or a Promotor, that in Lent eats flesh at your table, and yet is the first that accuseth thee to the Magistrate. If *Zibabe* waxed great under *Mephiboseth*, he will give him a lift for all he hath. A promoted Begger hath not seldome renounced his advancer.

And what else can be looked for from them ? They cannot make conscience of civill duties, who make none of divine. If a man have cast off his God, he will easily cast off his friend. They that have broken their faith with him, will keep no faith with us, When Religion is once gone, humanity will not stay long after.

I take leave of this point, with a caution. *Reveal* to such men *no secrets* ; for he that now loves thee dearly, may come to hate thee deadly : nor believe a word that they say ; for they are like *Antigones*, who never denied any sure, that was asked ; but withall, never performed any thing that he granted ; for what they promise when they are drunk, they forget when they are sober ; or like *Saul*, who being perswaded of *David's* worth and loyalty, swears, *as the Lord liveth he shall not die*, 1 *Sam.* 19. 6. yet within four verses, for all his oath, he darts a Speare at him, intending to nail him to the wall ; and in the next verse, hee sends messengers to his house to kill him ; or like the Councell of *Constance*, who made promise to *John Huss* of a conduct and safe return ; yet, like forsworn persecuters, put him to death.

S. 32.

OB. But here some of them will reply. That we lay the saddle upon the wrong horse, when we tax them for want of *peace*, *love*, and *friendship* ; in that the religious only shew *inconstancy*, by bidding farewell to their old friends and acquaintance, so soon as they embrace religion.

Ans^r. To this is answered. First that *constancy*, except it be in the truth and in a good cause, is *impudency* : change in the vicious is as great a vertue, as *constancy* in the vertuous. The *Almaines* were praised for changing their customs,

stones, which were found to be but bad before, as *Tacitus* affirmeth. *Constantine* in things *ill*, is so far from being a vertue, that it is an absolute *vice*. Of things imperfect, *change* is the way to perfect them. The *Gentiles* became believers, the *Jewes* Infidels, *Zacheus* turnes from the world, *Demas* turns to the world, *Paul* turns an Apostle, *Judas* an Apostate: I would fain know, whether *change* in the *Gentiles*, *Zacheus* and *Paul*, was not as great a vertue, as it was a vice in the *Jewes*, *Demas*, and *Judas*?

Saint *Paul* was inconstant indeed; for to day (as it were) he breathed out breathings and slaughter against the Disciples of *Christ* and to morrow he reacheth *Christ* in the Synagogue: what then? Will any (not debauched) censure him of ficklenesse for it? nay, will not all wise men think it a great honour to him, and commend him for shaking hands with the high Priests, and his fellow pursuivants, when once hee heard that voice from Heaven? *Act. 9. 4.*

There is not any so near unto us, but if he fall from God, wee may fall from him. It merits the name of wilfulness, when we will not admit of a lawful change to the better.

As *Philocrates* sported with *Demosthenes*: you may not marvell *Athenians*, that *Demosthenes* and I do differ, for he drinks water, and I drink wine: some laugh at us for being sober with *Rhenish*; and we as much pity them, for being drunk with *Canary*. Again, they censure us of *inconstancy*; we them of *impudency*. Now in this case when that is reputed ridiculous by one, which is accounted sage by another as wise; what shall we do, but make Gods Word the umpier? Wherefore, in all changes, I will have regard to these three things; God's approbation, mine own benefit, and the not harming of my neighbour; and then where the change is not a fault, I will never think it a disgrace, though the great exchange, the World, should judge it so.

Even *modesty*, in some, is a *vice*; when out of a weak flexibility of nature, man hath not courage enough, to deny the request of a seeming friend.

If a man never abandoneth evill, until he abandoneth evil company, it is high time to take courage: yea, the longer wee have been with them, the more need have we to hasten out of them. If this satisfie not, as the Emperor *Fredrick* said to certain of his Minions, that were importunate to get into their hands the ancient demeasns of the Empire, that he would rather be accounted of small liberallity, then perjured! even so had we, in this case rather be accounted inconstant, then be unconscionable.

To the second part of the objection, I answer. That true love and friendship is only among good men. The wicked may talk of it, and one drunkard may profess to another that he loves him as well as himself; and therein speake truth, for, saith *Augustine* most elegantly, to such an one, thou lov'st thy self, so as thou wilt destroy thy self; and thou wilt destroy him whom thou lovest as thy self; yea, better then themselves; for you shall have one *Ruffian* salute another, with, *God save you Sir*, but after some strange attestations, swear away himself with, *God damn me Sir*: now how can any wise man think him a friend, that is his own enemy? hee that is evill to himself, to whom will he be good?

But see the depth of such a mans love, and whether it be not to damn thy body and soul everlastingly. *S. Ambrose* tells us of one, who solicited a godly wo-

man to incontinency, saying, *he infinitely loved her*: she answers, *if you love me so well as you seem, put one of your fingers into the flame, till your flesh be burnt off*: he replies, *that was no part of love in her to require it*: yes, said she, *if yours be love, to cause both my body and soul to be burnt in hell fire, for ever, which by consequence will follow, if I yeeld to your request, and take your counsel*. Oh that thou hadst the wit to answer the drunkard, when he tempts thee, thus.

Indeed there is a kind of agreement, which is strengthened by sin it self: as if one see the keeper of a wench, his secrecy is bought for ever. But all this while, if one call another, friend, it is but to give him a nick-name, whereof he is not guilty: for true friendship is so sacred, holy, and pure, that it will not be used in evill: which made *Pericles*, when he was desired by a friend of his, to aide him with false witnesse, answer, *that he would befriend him as far as the Altar*, meaning so far, as stood with piety and religion, or his duty to God, but no further; and *Phocion* refuse to help his son in law *Cariles* in judgment, being accused for bribery, saying withall, *that he had made him his friend and allie in just and reasonable matters, and in them only*; and this likewise made *Papinian*, a Pagan, (being commanded by the Emperor *Caracalla*, whose Steward and familiar he was) refuse to defend an unjust cause, (as *Marcellinus* records) and thus it fares with all that are truly religious. There is not any one (quoth the sincere Christian) either in blood, or otherwise so near unto me, but if he fall from God, I will fall from him: why? our Saviour *Christ* hath taught me, both by precept and example, that I should acknowledg none (so as to be led by them) for my brother, sister, or mother, but such as do the will of my Father, which is in Heaven, *Matth. 12. 46. 10 51.*

Whereas on the contrary, in things lawfull, nothing rivits hearts so close, as religion: it unites them together as glews doth boards together: it makes a knot, even between such as never saw one anothers face, that *Alexander* can not cut: yea, Tyrants will sooner want invention for torments, then they with tortures be made treacherous. How many have chosen rather to embrace the flames, then to reveal their companions, and brethren in *Christ*? There is no friendship like the friendship of faith. There is *Amor*, among Beasts; *Dilectio*, among Men; *Charitas*, among Christians, that is their peculiar: nature, makes husband and wife but one flesh; grace makes them even one spirit: and it is a question, whether naturall Parents are to be loved above spiritual: we know that *Christ* preferred his spiritual kindred, to that of the flesh: and *major est connectio cordium, quam sanguinum*, saith *Bera*, Why it could we love them more, that brought us into this sinfull and miserable world; then those, that bring us into a better world, where is neither sin, nor misery? Why them, that live with us on earth but a while; equall to them, that shall live with us in Heaven for ever?

But to go on. Surely, as grace in her self is far above nature: so is she likewise in her effects; and consequently, unites in a far more durable bond. Christians hearts are joynd one to another, with so fast a glew, that no by respects can sever them: as you may see in that paire of friends, *Jonathan* and *David*: none had so much cause to disaffect *David*, as *Jonathan*; none in all *Israel*, should

be such a looser by *David's* success, as he; *Saul* was sure enough sealed for his time, only his successor should forgo all that which *David* should gain; so none but *David* stands in *Jonathan's* way to the Crown; and yet all this cannot abate one dram of his love. As also in *Ruth* and *Naomy*, whom nothing but death, could part, *Ruth* 1. If you will see other examples, look *Rom.* 1. 10 11. 1 *Thes.* 2. 17, 19. 20. *Galathians* 4. 18, 19. *Act.* 20. 37, 38. and 16. 15. *Luke* 4. 42. 2 *Kings* 2. 4. 9. and 4. 9, 10. As grace is the greatest attractive of love; so is it the surest bond; it is like varnish, that makes feelings not only shine, but last. Where God uniteth hearts, carnall respects are too weak to dissolve them; since that which breaks off affection, must needs be stronger then that which conjoyneth it, and why doth *S. John* use these words, once to the elect Lady, 2 *John* 1. 2. and again to *Gaius*, 3 *John* 1. whom I love in the truth, but to shew, that to love in the truth, is the only true love? Indeed, religion is the surest cement of all societies: the looser joynts of all naturall and civil relations, are compacted and confirmed by the sinews of grace and religion: and such a loose joynted friendship cannot hold long, which wants the nerves of religion. Wherefore give me any foe, rather then a resolved Christian: no friend unless a man truly honest

S. 33.

BUT here it will be objected. That we hate and condemn all, who are not like our selves: that we remember them so much to bee sinners, that, in the mean time, we forget them to be men and brethren.

I answer. This were to dash the first Table against the second; whereas they are conscious of both alike. A charitable heart, even where it hates, there it wisheth that it might have cause to love: his anger and indignation against sin, is alwayes joyned with love and commiseration towards the sinner, as is lively set out, *Mark.* 3. 5. and *Philippians* 3. 18. where *S. Paul* tells us of them (weeping) *thus are enemies to the crosse of Christ*: and *Mar.* 3. 5. That our Saviour, while he looked upon the *Pharisees* angrily, mourned for the hardness of their hearts. Zeale is a compounded affection of love and anger. When *Moses* was angry with the *Israelites* and chid them sharply; at the same time he prayed for them heartily. And *Jonathan*, when he was angry with his Father, for vowing *David's* death; did still retain the duty and love, both of a Son to his Father, and of a subject to his Sovereign. A good man cannot speak of them without passion, and compassion: yea, they weep not so much for their own sins, as we doe, (according to *S. Chrysostome's* example) O that our prayers and teares could but recover them.

Those that are truly gracious, know how to receive the blessings of God, without contempt of them who want; and have learned to be thankful, without overliness; knowing themselves have been, or may be, as wretched and undeserving, as *S. Augustine* speaks. A true Christian can distinguish between persons and vices; offenders, and offences; and have no peace with the one, while he hath true peace with the other; love them, as men, hate them, as evil men; love, what they are, not what they do; as God made them, not as they have made themselves; not so hate, as to be a foe to goodness; nor so love, as to foster iniquity. It is a question, whether is worst of the two; to be

vices friend, or vertues enemy. Now saith *Augustine*, *He is not angry with his brother, that is angry with the sin of his brother*: yea, if we hate the vices of a wicked man, and love his person; as the Physician, hateth the disease, but loveth the person of the diseased; there is nothing more praise worthy, as saith the same Father. And another, *It is the honest mans commendation to condemn a vile person*. And another, *I know no greater argument of goodnesse, then the hatred of wickednesse, in whomsoever it resides*: yea, *David* makes it a note of his integrity, *Psal. 31. 6. and 139. 21. 22. and 26. 4. 5. and in Psal. 15.* He is bold to ask the Lord this question; *Who shall dwell in thy tabernacle, who shall rest in thy holy mountain?* the answer he receives is this, 1. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness.* 2. *And speaketh the truth from his heart.* 3. *He that slandereth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbour, nor receiveth a false report against his neighbour.* But the fourth is, *Hee, in whose eyes a vile person is contemned*, while hee honoureth them that fear the Lord: and he cannot be sincere who doth not honour vertue in rags, and loath vice, though in a robe of State. So that, as the Prophet asked *Ichoiaphat* 2 Chron. 19. 2. *wouldst thou help the wicked, and love them that hate the Lord?* it may be demanded; should Christians be friends with them who are enemies to the Cross of Christ? no, no. And yet to the men, separate from their manners, we have no quarrel, but with them better, then they either wish to us, or to themselves.

Indeed, if we should contemn them, as they think we do; it were but a just recompence of their folly and wickedness: for as one speaking of the poverty of the purse, saith, *that poverty is justly contemptible, which is purchased by following of vice*: so may I, of the poverty of the mind; that poverty of wit and grace is justly contemptible, which is purchased by a wilfull rebellion against God, and the great means of knowledge and grace which we enjoy. To conclude this point, we think it's better to leave them, and be thought proud, wrongfully; then stay with them, and be known bad, certainly.

S. 34.

Again, some will alledg, we give offence to them that are without, which is contrary to the Apostles precept, who saith, *Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Grecians, nor to the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 32. as they will make a crooked staffe serve to beat a Dog, when a straight one cannot be found.

Nothing but ignorance is guilty of this scruple: for the offence is only taken, not given: and herein they pervert the Apostles words, touching offences, as *Pharaoh's* servants did the same word, when they said unto their Master concerning *Moses*, *How long shall he be an offence unto us?* Exodus. 10. 7. for he meaneth in that place, only such offences as are contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, as he hath expounded his own meaning, Rom. 16. 17. And if nothing might be done, whereat wicked men are offended, then the word of God must not be preacht, nor his holy and divine precepts walked in, yea, *Christ* must not have come into the world to redeem it, for *he was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness*, 1 Cor. 1. 23. But all which God hath commanded must be done; and all which he hath left, indifferent,

ferent, may be done, and none may, or ought to censure the doing of it. The precept is plain, *one believeth that he may eat of all things ; and another which is weak catch herbs*, saith the Apostle, and what followes ? *let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not ; and let not him that eateth not, condemn him that eateth ; for God hath received him, Rom. 14. 2. 3.*

If I know the thing to be good, and that I do it to a good end, what care I for their idle misconstruction ? morally good actions must not be suspended, upon danger of causelesse scandall : in things indifferent and arbitrary, it is fit to be over-ruled by feare of *offence* : but if men will stumble in the plain ground of good ; let them fall without our regard, not without their own perill.

Now that the Cuckoe may acknowledg this for her own egg, notwithstanding she hath laid it in the Doves nest ; let the men of the world know, that it is not an *offence given* by us, but *taken* by them ; yea, they first *give* an *offence* to us by their ungodliness, and after take the just *reward* of the same, namely, to be excluded our society for an *offence* : wherein they imitate *Athanagoras*, who (as *Tully* reporteth) would alwayes complain of his punishment, but of his fault he would say nothing : or *Adam*, who was ashamed of his nakednesse, but not of his sin : wicked men are neither sensible of doing injury, nor patient in suffering for it. It's a rule of justice, that what men deserve, they should suffer : yea, in this particular case, Gods rule is, if thou *take away the precious from the vile*, thou shalt be according to my word, *Ier. 15. 19.* And we would have them suffer this exclusion no longer, then till they deserve it no more : let them return unto us, (do as *Themistocles*, who being in his youth vicious and deboysh, afterwards made the world amends, by his brave exploits) and we will return unto them, keep them company, account them true friends, good men : otherwise we have an absolute prohibition from God himself, *Ier. 15. 19, let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them.* And good reason there is for it, in a musical instrument, the strings that be out of tune, are set up, or set down to the rest ; but the strings that be in tune, are never stirred, nor medled with : though indeed I might have stopped their mouths with this very question, whether is better to obey God, or humour sensual men ? As our Saviour Christ stopt the high Priests mouths, when they asked him, by what authority he cursed the fruitlesse Fig-tree ; cast the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, &c. by demanding of them, *whether Johns baptisme was from Heaven, or of men, Mar. 11. 29.*

But in case they will not return unto us, we had rather offend each of them once, then our selves every day. It is pity that ever the water of baptisme was spilt upon his face, that cares more to discontent the world, then to wrong God. They are unjust and over partial, that will go about to exact from us, that which we owe not, with more rigor then they will exact from themselves, that which they owe.

And so I have given you the reasons, why such as are, or desire to be conscionable and religious, break off company with them ; and vindicated the most usual exceptions against it. I will now make some use of the point ; and so leave it for them to chew upon.

§. 35.

1. **T**O sum up all in a word, or lay all these grounds and motives together. If we endanger our selves, our lives, our estates, loose our credit, our peace, our time, by frequent associating with ungodly men, and can no way expect their love and friendship; be sure you come not (or at least stay not) in their company. It is not safe venturing among them, in confidence of our own strength; no more then it is to consort with cheaters, in hope that they will not cozen us. Dead fire, we know, being stird up, will burn a fresh: and corruption, like a candle new put out, is soon kindled again; If Sathan but blow upon it, the own heat is enough to enflame it.

No, venture nor thy self, though thou hast once, or twice come off clear from them; *Sampson* could withstand his wives temptation seven dayes, but at length, by her importunity, she prevailed with him, *Judg. 14*. Over many in this case are like to sick men, who when they have had a good day, or two, think themselves presently well again; so they make bold to put off their Kerchises, to put on thinner garments, and to venture into the fresh ayre; whereupon follows unrecoverable relapses. Wherefore take heed, or if thou dost keep them company, it is an argument, that thou art sick of their disease, idleness. And of this till so much.

2. If wicked company are so infectious, that they will work a consumption in any mans vertues, that is dayly conversant with them, and waste them from an ounce, to a dram; from a dram, to a scruple, to a grain, to nothing, so that he may say with *Christ* in the croud, *who hath touched me, for I feel vertue gone out of me?* Let us be (as *Seneca* adviseth) *more circumspect, with whom we eat and drinke, then what we eat and drinke*. He that hath money, will beware of thieves: if you have any giace venture it not among these rislers: for, art thou inclined to pray? they will tempt thee to play: wouldst thou go to a Sermon? by their perswasion, the Tavern or Theater stands in the way. But alas! if others tempt thee not, thou wilt tempt others: temptation needs not stan, like a Tavern-bush, in thy way, for thou wilt invite thy self, hunt after temptation.

3. Is every man busie in dispending that quality, which is predominant in him? And can we converse with none but will work upon us, and by the unperceived stealth of time, assimilate us to their own customs? will two friends, like two brands set each other on fire with good, or ill, when one alone will go out? will a streight twig, if it be tied to a crooked bough, become crooked; or a crooked twig, become streight, if it be tied to a streight rule: as *Peter* denied his Master amongst the *Jews*, whom hee contest amongst the Apostles? Then keep company, but let it be with such as may make thee better; shie evill society, least their kind words so work upon thy yeelding nature, that thou knowest not how to deny: they are such as have taken the Devils oath of Allegiance; and thou hast small hope to prevail with them to good.

A certain King (as *St. Augustin* reports) being hard favqured, and fearing least his Queen should bring forth children like himself; got many faire and beautiful pictures, which he caused her steadfastly to behold every day: go thou and do likewise, be conversant with good men, and in good things, and thou shalt

shalt do that unbiddlen, which others can scarce do compelled by the Law, as Aristotle speaks of the Study of Philosophy. O what an happy thing it is to converse with the vertuous ! their gracious words, or holy examples, will be sure to stir up the gifts of God in us ; they will either adde something to our zeale, or something to our knowledg : the society of Prophets, is able to make even a Saul prophetic. The sight of others falling heartily to their meate, brings on our stomachs : yea, if we have no gifts to stir up, their communion cannot but leave some tincture behind it, if not of Piety, yet, at least, of a good profession, and some inclinableness. If Saul had not had a good and discreet companion, when he went to seek his Fathers Asses, he had returned back as wise as he came : but now he is drawn into counsel with the Man of God, and heares more then he hoped for, 1 Sam. 9. 6. The messengers of the same Saul, when they lived in the Court, were (as is likely) caried away with the swinge of the times, and did apply themselves to their Masters ungodly practises, as appeareth in their going to apprehend David, that Saul might kill him : yet were they no sooner in company with the Prophets, in Noyah, but their minds were changed, and they likewise prophesied, 1 Sam. 19. 20.

Ob. But say some of Bacchus his fooles. I keep company with brave fellows, that are generous, free, bountifull, &c.

Ans. Alasse ! thou dost but slander him with these titles. He is a proud, ignorant, inconsiderate Ass, that fears he is not loved, unless he be lose and scattering ; that strives so to be like a god in bounty, that he throws himself into the lowest estate of man. He that gives to, and spends upon all abundantly (which is for none to do, but him that hath all) he that had rather keep company with the dregs of men, then not be the best man : he that ravels out a spacious fortune upon flatterers ; he that out of vain glory will be worshipt and kneed, to the spending of a fair inheritance, and then ends his dayes in lewdness and contempt (as what is it, that ambition will not practise, rather then let her port decline) he is a foolish Steward, that thus showers away in one year, what his ancestors have been gathering twenty : yea, he is a mad man, that makes his kindness to others, prove cruelty to himself, and all his posterity.

Ob. Again, others are all for mirth ; they keep company at the Tavern, with none but curious and quaint wits, eloquent Poets and Orators ; now ask them, as Manoah did Sampson, Is there never a companion for thee among thy Brethren, the people of God, that thou must associate thy self with these of uncircumcised hearts and tongues ? They will answer. Give me only these for my companions, for they please me.

Ans. Can none please thee, but such as displease God ? dost thou not know, that who so will be a friend to such, makes himself the enemy of God ? James, 4. 4. or art thou ignorant, that pleasant wits, viciated in accustomed lewdness, with sweet tunes entise men to destruction ; as is morald in that fiction of the Sirens, they delight the sense, but slay the soul : and will any man poyson his body, to please his taste ? or go into an infected house, to fetch out a rich suite ? Or put his finger into a fiery Crucible, to take out gold : It's true, like Jugglers and such as play trickes of Legerdism, they will deceive us with a kind of pleasure and delight : but is it any priviledg for a man to be tickled to death,

death, that so he may dye laughing? Their discourse may be resembled to the fruit that undid us all, which was fair in sight, smooth, in handling, sweet in taste, but deadly in effect: or to the *Clarian* water, which made men eloquent, but withall short liv'd: or the gifts, which those Elfes called *Lamia*, used to present unto children which made so many as accepted of them loose their comeliness for ever after. And he that much affects their company (being an honest man) is just like that free Citizen, that so doted on a female slave, that hee would needs marry her; though by that match, he were sure, by the Law, to become a slave with her. He overvalues the drunken and reeling love of these men, that buyes it with the ruine of himself, his estate, and family. Wherefore, as in Meats, we do not only stand upon pleasantness, but wholesomnesse: so let us regard *wholesomnesse* as well as *pleasantness*, in our discourse and company. A good man can lend nothing to the increase of mirth in wicked company: and he that will not lend, let him take heed of borrowing.

S. 36.

Fourthly, If thou wouldst neither be inticed nor enforced to pledg them, in any of their wicked customes, *divorce* thy self from all *acquaintance* and *soiety* with the vicious, yea, entertain no *parly* with them.

There are some vices of that nature, that they cannot be vanquished but by avoiding; such is fornication, *flye fornication*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Corinth.* 6. 18. that is, *flye the company* of fornicators; for to be in a lewd womans company, saith *Salomon*, and depart innocent; and to take fire in a mans bosome, and not singe his cloaths; or go upon live coles, and his feet not be burnt, are equally possible, *Prov.* 6. 27. 28. such is the frailty of mans nature, that if the eye but see, or the ear hear, or the hand but touch a whorish woman, the heart will go nigh to catch, and take fire, verse 29. And thus it fares with this sin, bid a man consort a while with drunkards, and depart from them innocent, you may as well put a match to dry powder, and forbid it to take fire, except he be very well stayed, and of better govern'd affections then ordinary. It is not safe to commit a little Wherry to the Seas violence. A stick that hath once been in the fire, much more a Torch newly extinguish't, being forthwith put to the flame, will soon be kindled again. Wherefore keep out of the reach of thy vicious *acquaintance*, and if they becken thee one way, be thou sure to take the contrary, at least entertain no parley with them. When Castles once come to a parley, there is great fear they will yeeld: and gates that are alwayes open, will sometimes admit an enemy. No disputing with Sathan, or his deputies: when our first Parents fell to arguing the case with that old Serpent, though in the state of innocencie, when they had wit at will, and their reason at command, they found him too hard for them: how much more too weak shall we find our selves, that now are as we are? surely, we are like to lose all, if once we enter into disputation with that old Sophister, and crafty Fox, after the experience of six thousand years almost, and when our own flesh (which is the greatest both deceiver and dissembler in the world) is become his cunning solicitor.

Alasse! he desires no more then to be heard speak; for grant him but this, and he will perswade thee to believe, even contrary to thine own knowledg: as how easily did he perswade *Eve*, by himself; and *Adam*, by her, (when they gave

but

but ear to him,) o believe what he spake, though they had heard God himself say the contrary, but a little before? *Gen. 2. 17.* and if innocency found no means of resistance, what hope have we so extreemly degenerated? And indeed, why do we pray not to be led into temptation, if we lead our selves into temptation? If we will not keep our selves from the occasion; God will not keep us from the sin: and if God do not keep us, we cannot be kept: we cannot, we will not choose but fall. Wherefore shun the society of evil men, as *Joseph* shunned the society of his Mistrresse, and leave them that leave God, as *Noah* did the old World, and that by Gods commandement, *Gen. 7. 1. 7.* and *Abraham* the *Cananites*, *Gen. 12. 1.* and *Lot* the *Sodomites*, *Gen. 19. 17.* and *Israel* the *Egyptians*, *Exod. 12. 37. 41.* and *Muab* and *Ammon*, *Numb. 27. 1. 2. 3. 16 17.*

§. 37.

BUT is it warrantable, may some say, to separate from our old acquaintance, (being vicious) and other the like company?

Not totally; for then we must go out of the world, *1 Cor. 5. 10.* nor from any in all cases; for then we must separate from the publike assemblies: nor in regard of civil society, and necessary commerce; for this were to unglue the whole worlds frame, which is contexted only by commerce and contracts, there be certain wise uses to be made of them, for our convenience or necessity, which need not, yea, must not be forborn: as wherefore serves discretion, but that (as a glasse window) it may let in the light, and keep out the winde?

Neither can wicked men, in this case, be avoided: but so long as we are in this World, we must converse with men of the World: and we know it is lawfull enough, in tearms of civility, to deal with infidels, yea, even the savage *Cannibals* may receive an answer of outward courtesie. If a very dog fawn upon us we stroke him on the head, and clap him on the back, much lesse is the common bond of humanity untied by grace; disparity in spiritual professions, is no warrant for ingratitude: yet a little friendship with such, is enough; the lesse communion with any of Gods enemies, the more safety: and sure I am, that those who affect a familiar entirenesse with such, bewray either too much boldnesse, or to little conscience.

Yea, we may not only converse with evil men, but communicate with them also without harm, so it be not in evil things: as in the Sacrament the unworthy receiver eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *sibi, non tibi*, to himself, not to thee.

But as touching a familiar entirenesse, and leagues of amity, that they are unfit, unwarrantable, dangerous, is easie to prove. As what saith the Holy Ghost by *S. Paul*? *Wee command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh inordinately, and not after the instruction which ye received of us, 2 Thes. 3. 6.* And again, speaking unto the converted *Ephesians*, touching others among them who were whoremongers, unclean persons, covetous men, and idolaters, he saith, *be not companions with them, Ephes. 5. 5. 7.* And lastly, in that case of the incestuous *Corinthian*, he doth not only excommunicate him, but makes a rule upon it, that if any one, which professeth himself a Christian, shall live in any scandalous course, that they shall not afford him so much as civill

evil and familiar converse, 1 Corinth. 5. 11. If any man that is called a brother, saith he, he a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one eat not. Mark this all ye swinish drunkards and beastly livers, that God dischargeth us your society.

But to proceed. Why was that Law enacted, for the strict avoiding of Leprous persons? it was not the body only that was herein respected, by the God of spirits; those that are *spiritually contagious* must be still and ever avoided, they must be separated from us, we from them; they from us, by just censures; or if not, we from them, by a voluntary declination of their familiar conversation: or if they can joyn our heart to theirs, they will disjoyn it from God; to let passe Saint Pauls charge, 2 Corinthians 6. 17. *come out from among them, and separate your selves*: And that of the Angel, Revelation 18. 4. *come out of her my people*, which especially have relation to Idolaters: see what hath been the practise of Gods people since Noah, Lot, Abraham, and Israhel, which have been alledged already. Doth not David say, *I have not sate with vain persons, neither kept company with the dissemblers. I have hated the assembly of evill doers, and will not company with the wicked*, Psalm 26. 4. 5. And was not Joseph, whom the Holy Ghost stillerth a just man, fully minded (before the Angell forbad him) to put away Mary, after he was betrothed unto her, when he but supposed her to be dishonest? Matthew 1. 19. And was not all this, to shew us what wee should doe in the like cases?

Wherefore, let us tread in their steps, and say with a worthy Divine, *though I may have many bad acquaintance, yet I will have no bad companions*: for even the tame beasts will not keep with the wild; nor the clean dwell with the leprous. But above all, let us keep no drunkards, nor swearers in our houses, Psalm 101. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. no, nor scoffers, Ismael must be turned out of doors, when he once fals a jeering of Isaac: and indeed if we do, it is a shrewd suspicion we are not sincere our selves: for grace, as it is resembled to heat, so like heat, it gathereth together things of one kind, separateth things of a contrary nature, as drosse from Gold.

In fine, if they have forsaken all honesty and good conscience, it is time for us to forsake them: if they depart from vs, in the foundation of faith and good works; let us (as justly wee may) depart from them, in the building of brotherly fellowship: they build on the sand, let us build on the rock: yea, if they forsake the right way, we must forsake them, or Christ will forsake us.

But least all that hath been said, should not be sufficient to persuade thee; behold heer the drunkard delineated, and that will certainly avert thee from consorting with a fiend so foul and filthy, so ugly, and loathsome: which if it do, I hope some good man or other, will stick it upon every post: that all may be kept from being enamored, with this worst then beastly abomination.

Visage a man, but a Brotheus.

Heart, a Swine.

Head, a Cephalus.

Tongue, an Aspe.

in *Belly, a Lumpe.*

Appetite, a Leech.

Sloth, an Ignavus.

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a { Ierſſe. } for { Exceſſive devouring.
 { Goate. } { Luſt.
 { Siren. } { Flattery.
 { Hyæna. } { Subtilty.
 { Panther. } { Cruelty.

Goate. Lust.

Siren. } for } Flattery.

Hyæna. Subtilty.

(Panther.) (Cruelty.)

(*Envy*ing, a Basiliske.

Antipathy to all good, a Lexus.

1. *Hindring others from good, a Remora.*

Life, a Salamander.

Conscience, an Ostrich.

Spirit a Devil {
 { 1 in surpassing } others { in Sinne.
 { 2 in tempting } { to Sinne.
 { 3 in drawing } { to Perdition.

2. in tempting others to Sinne.

{3 in drawing } {to Perdition.

even the most despicable peeece of all humanity , and not worthy to be reckoned among the Creatures which God made.

And so much for *defence* } which may be *avoided*.
against what they *do*,

against what they do,

If you would have as much } which must be *endured*.
against what they *say*. }

against what they say.

de a late Treatise, called, THE VICTORY OF PATIENCE.

Or if any would have the foregoing part of this *Soverain Antedote*: let them inquire for *Sin Stigmatized*, or *The Drunkard's Character* with which it is bound, and in a larger letter. Likewise at *James Crumps*, in *Little Bartholomewes Well-yard*: they may have several peeces, of sundry the most needfull tracts, composed for the common good by the same Author.

FINIS.